

4 January 1982  
MAU-2001

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Austrian Bureau -- December 1981

I. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Dramatic is perhaps the only way to describe December as bureau editors, monitors, technicians and teletypists scrambled to cover fast-moving events as divergent as the declaration of martial law in Poland, the kidnapping of U.S. General Dozier in Verona and the suicide of Albania's Shehu.

2. With Poland's crisis finally coming to a head, the bureau opened early on the morning of Sunday, 13 December, to report initial East European reaction to events. For over a week after martial law severed Poland's links to the outside world, the bureau was left in an uncomfortable observer status until London PMU received and began faxing items from copies of TRYBUNA LUDU and ZOLNIERZ WOLNOSCI received on 21 December. We did not begin receiving our own papers until 24 December when a copy of the army daily arrived unexpectedly. With no LOT flights scheduled for Vienna, deliveries continued to be sporadic throughout the rest of the month, with those few papers we did get presumably coming in aboard the "Chopin Express" trains from Warsaw. With no idea what papers we would get or when, we agreed to send our new Polish monitor, [redacted] to Caversham on a baptism-by-fire TDY to assist the BBC over the holidays. Finally, as the month and year drew to a close, we began coordinating contributions to the periodic updates on the Polish media filed by London Bureau at the request of the Deputy Director/FBIS.

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3. At the suggestion of DCM Polansky at a 17 December country team meeting, the bureau chief briefed Ambassador Cummings and embassy section chiefs on the ability of FBIS/BBC to monitor the Polish media.

4. In other developments, this year's bureau Christmas party on 18 December will probably go unrivaled for many a holiday season. As if to establish an early pace, the bureau began the day with immediate filing of ANSA material on the kidnapping of U.S. General Dozier. Later, in the midst of the fun, food and drink of the evening party, senior Albanian monitor [redacted] went upstairs to listen to the 1900 GMT Tirana evening news. Much to everyone's surprise, especially the initially skeptical duty editor who at the moment was behind closed doors in the men's room, Victor soon came running out of his booth shouting from the second floor

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landing: "Shehu has committed suicide! Suicide!" All this resulted in the bureau's first flash message since May 1980 when Tito died. We then initiated an open watch on Tirana radio and ATA which unfortunately refused to shed any clues on the death, limiting themselves to a single repeat of the original announcement and obituary.

it explains  
old wording  
too!

5. As a result of a heavy press and use-or-lose leave, ELAD agreed to assist the bureau by processing a backlog of 15 Belgrade TV tapes.

B. Communications

As the year ended, we were ahead of schedule as far as installation of the second Vienna-Caversham circuit was concerned. With our end ready for operation as early as 14 December, we had just to wait until New Year's eve when BBC was prepared to begin testing. Early results were most promising.

C. Lateral Consumers\*

Early in the month, DCM Polansky called the bureau chief to request that we add the Chilean ambassador to the list of those who receive the BBC's wirefiled Monitoring Report for Eastern Europe.

II. PERSONNEL

1. Recruitment efforts continued to yield mixed results. The promising Serbo-Croatian, who had flown in from Geneva on 7 November to be tested, unfortunately decided against joining us since she expects to return to Yugoslavia in the foreseeable future. It's now back to the local papers to see if we can scare up any new candidates. With regard to the Polish vacancy, London Bureau had reduced a list of 40 applicants to about 10 good prospects who were to be called in for tests and interviews.

2. Per arrangement with Harlan Moen, our primary contact in the MBFR delegation, two of our Czech monitors -- [redacted] and [redacted] -- attended the 291st plenary in the Hofburg Palace on 3 December to hear Czech Ambassador Keblusek speak. The MBFR people have been most cooperative in helping us set up this new program, and we hope to get as many of our people as possible into the next round of talks.

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3. We were happy to welcome senior Czech press monitor [redacted] back to work on 3 December. [redacted] had been on extended sick leave since 6 September due to complications that were originally thought to stem from a heart condition but were later diagnosed as thyroid related.

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III. VISITS

To the bureau: Prague Embassy Consul Richard Wallen and Political Officer Pat Hughes, 2 December, for orientation.

IV. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The bureau chief and wife, the deputy chief and the chief engineer and wife all attended the ambassador's 7 December Christmas reception at the residence.

FOR THE CHIEF, AUSTRIAN BUREAU



Deputy Chief  
FBIS Austrian Bureau

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Attachments:

Production Report  
Nonstaff Personnel Report

cc: Chief, FBIS London Bureau